

VZCZCXYZ0002
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHHE #0115 0791302
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 201302Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4890
INFO RUEHSW/AMEMBASSY BERN IMMEDIATE 1133
RUEHDL/AMEMBASSY DUBLIN IMMEDIATE 0076
RUEHKV/AMEMBASSY KYIV IMMEDIATE 0746
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE 0108
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM IMMEDIATE 8675
RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA IMMEDIATE 4685
RUEHYE/AMEMBASSY YEREVAN IMMEDIATE 0042
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0011
RUEHPS/AMEMBASSY PRISTINA PRIORITY 0053
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 0972

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 000115

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/20/2019

TAGS: MARR PREL NATO KPKO KV

SUBJECT: NATO KFOR MISSION: IN TOGETHER, OUT TOGETHER

REF: SECSTATE 26179

Classified By: Charge' d'Affaires Michael A. Butler, for
reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

¶1. (U) Charge' raised US concerns over possible European withdrawal from KFOR during a March 19 meeting with MFA DG for Americas/Asia Kalkku (REF). Although Kalkku does not have direct responsibility for the issue, she is a European Political-Military expert with considerable recent experience in Balkan matters, including KFOR.

¶2. (C) According to Kalkku, Finland did not intend to withdraw from KFOR. In fact, it was likely to extend its leadership of the Multi-National Brigade Central (MNB-C) for another year. It did intend, however, to reduce its current KFOR commitment by approximately half, with withdrawals taking place gradually throughout this year. Charge reiterated that the US hoped that Finland would make any decision on future force levels with Kosovo's security and political stability in mind.

¶3. (C) In a meeting on March 20, Timo Kantola, Director of the MFA's Unit for Security Policy, told PolChief that in assuming the leadership of MNB-C the GOF had increased its contingent from 400 to approximately 450. With no nation volunteering to take over MNB-C leadership from Finland in August, last December the GOF took the decision to continue its leadership role for an indefinite period. They also decided to decrease their contingent by approximately 200. Kantola said the Finns have heard no criticism of their decision to decrease in Kosovo, though he acknowledged some criticism within EU circles regarding their decision to withdraw most of their fifty-odd soldiers from Bosnia this June. Kantola was vague about what Finland might do, as it frees approximately 250 of the 1000 slots designated for overseas operations. He pointed to the GOF's decision to increase in Chad, and the decision to add an additional 20 military trainers in Afghanistan.

BUTLER